

REPORTS OF THE EXPERT CONSULTATION  
TO EXAMINE CHANGES IN ABUNDANCE AND SPECIES  
COMPOSITION OF NERITIC FISH RESOURCES

San José, Costa Rica, 18–29 April 1983

Edited by

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## PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This volume consists of the Reports of the Expert Consultation to Examine Changes in Abundance and Species Composition of Neritic Fish Resources held in San José, Costa Rica, 18–29 April 1983. The Proceedings, containing the technical contributions produced for, and presented and discussed at, the Expert Consultation are published in Volumes 2 and 3 of this FAO Fisheries Report No. 291.

This volume contains a brief account of the Expert Consultation, followed by the reports of the four working groups which met during the consultation and were responsible for extracting the main results, conclusions and recommendations of the meeting. Collectively these constitute the Report of the Expert Consultation. Each working group produced a draft report during the consultation which, together with comments and suggestions made at the plenary session on the last day, were the basis on which the chairman of each working group prepared the final versions presented here.

This document was reviewed and edited by Drs. J. Csirke and G.D. Sharp\*, Technical Secretaries of the Expert Consultation. Ms. D. Dearing was responsible for the bulk of the typing and preparation of this volume, assisted by Mrs. Y. Corsetti.

This Expert Consultation was one of the preparatory meetings for the FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development. The consultation was organised by FAO with the support of IOC, CPPS, DANIDA, ICLARM, ICSEAF, IDB, SELA, Unesco and WMO.

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### ABSTRACT

There is a high degree of uncertainty in dealing with varying neritic fish resources. It is difficult to establish national development policies based on contributions from an unstable fishing sector and long-term objectives can hardly be achieved unless a management strategy can be developed to cope with this variability. More flexibility needs to be introduced in the fishery sector to allow its adaptation to resource changes, and these and the causal environmental processes need to be properly monitored. Some of the problems and alternatives associated with exploitation, research and management of fluctuating fisheries are discussed.

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